



**Mount
Vernon**
IOWA

Chris Nosbisch, City Administrator
Douglas Shannon, Chief of Police

Jamie A. Hampton, Mayor

Council:

Eric Roudabush
Scott Rose
Tom Wieseler
Stephanie West
Deb Herrmann

To Mt. Vernon Residents,

I know the past few weeks have been trying for many of you and at times, extremely stressful. To complicate matters, States, Counties, and Cities have struggled to maintain a cohesive response throughout this pandemic. I am writing to you today to provide what insight I can into the response that has been put forward by our local community leaders in the hope that it may bring a little clarity into an otherwise volatile situation.

City offices have been closed and park equipment cordoned off because we cannot assure the safety of our citizens while using these venues. It would be an impossible task for our staff to sanitize this equipment after every visitor, leaving the door open for the virus to linger. The current CDC information states that Covid-19 can last on untreated surfaces for multiple days. The locations we have identified for closure require you to open, climb or touch a surface that could harbor the Covid-19 virus. An example of this would be the dog park as it requires you to walk through a series of gates, and open latches in order to access the open spaces. In this instance, closing the facility was the most prudent solution.

The City Council suspended the garbage tag program in recognition of the financial strain that our friends and neighbors may be encounter over the coming weeks. Water shut-offs have been discontinued for the time being as well. We highly encourage all of our residents to pay what you can during this period of uncertainty as it will likely linger for weeks and months to come. City crews are working staggered shifts to ensure we have adequate staff to serve you. Our crews are working to ensure amenities, including the pool, will be open for business when the pandemic ends and we are allowed to open these venues.

The Mayor declared an emergency in Mt. Vernon yesterday. He did this, in part, because it is how your government works. Emergency powers extend purchasing capabilities, eases decision making processes and make available certain State and Federal monies.

At the time of this letter, there have been NO confirmed cases of Covid-19 reported in Mt. Vernon by the Linn County Public Health Department. Does this mean that Covid-19 has not made it into Mt. Vernon? That scenario is very unlikely, and the reason we are taking more extreme measures to ensure your safety.



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At this time, I am encouraging everyone in the community to visit our website at <https://www.cityofmtvernon-ia.gov> for the most up to date information at our disposal. While you are on the City's website, sign up for Nixle messages (right hand side of the website). Like the MVCSD, NIXLE allows the City to send out email and text alerts when new information is released. If you would like information on Covid-19, please visit www.211iowa.org or the mobile app www.211iowa.org/211app.

Look to you neighbors, support our local businesses as much as you can, and be encouraged knowing we will come out of this pandemic a stronger community.

Sincerely,

Chris Nosbisch, City Administrator